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THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.



WALL PAPER MANUFACTURERS AND THE PAINTING TRADE.

RINGING together in a business concern the several cognate branches of house decoration, is properly in the line of artistic development. Decoration, from its composite character, by being carried out under unity of direction, assures a well considered idea, of which each feature holds an appropriate relation to the whole. The architects of olden times took painters, mosaic workers, carvers and molders into their councils, and with the best results.

The decorator of to-day aims to save the public from those heterogeneous combinations in which different tastes and fancies clash. Vast organizations have thus grown up in decorative specialties related to each other, skill combined with capital and its attendant facilities being brought to bear on the carrying out of consistent and harmonious plans. Prominent among the firms thus engaged are certain wall paper manufacturers, a body who spend enormous sums in securing novel designs from home and foreign artists. As judges of harmonies of color, the suitability of patterns to the purposes and structural character of rooms, they appropriately combine with paper hanging, painting and relief work.

The Wall Paper Manufacturers' pool is organized for the purpose of maintaining prices, based on certain styles and finish of manufactured goods, but does not interest itself as a body in the retail trade carried on by a number of its members.

The Master House Painters' Association, in a late communication to the pool as well as to the non-pool manufacturers, make two leading complaints, one being that individuals buying at retail have the exceptional advantage of returning unused stock, the other that customers brought or sent by them to make selections are kidnapped by the manufacturers through suggestions made to them to have not only their paper hanging but painting done by said manufacturers.

The several manufacturers who have retail departments and of whom we have made inquiry deny the first allegation, and as to the second all manufacturers who have been interviewed declare that so far from endeavoring to take customers out of the hands of painters, they aim at giving both parties complete satisfaction, and studiously abstain from setting forth the facilities they claim to possess, for more economic, and in relation to general effect, more artistic work; further, that they would regard the opposite course as dishonorable.

"Our object," remarked one manufacturer, "is to secure the confidence of painters," and he cited leading officials of the Master Painters' Association who had dealt with him exclusively for years, sending also his customers. Another declared "that he could not understand the drift of the circular." "Cases may occur," said a member of one firm, "in which a customer is lost to a painter owing to the customer acting on the promptings of his own judgment, wanting to save time and money, and to have all items of cost in one bill." "What are the painters driving at?" exclaimed one interrogator. "Wall paper manufacturers are their natural allies and, after all, don't we employ painters?" One manufacturer declared that "the business of decoration was not in proper hands when entrusted to painters, and that the wall paper business was too important to be subordinated to them."

The pool is recognized by the painters themselves as beneficial to their interests. It is certain that if every manufacturer was a free lance the public would be losers to a very great extent, and the cutting of prices through competition would be followed by inferiority of quality, shortness in rolls, the debasement of all the colors that enter into the composition, and the number of first-class experts engaged on designs would be curtailed. Thus the public would have everything to lose and nothing to gain by the abandonment of standard prices based on cost to manufacturers, with a reasonable profit superadded, this assuring a certain style and quality of goods, goods sold for less money being necessarily inferior in quality of stock and color. In short the maintenance of a uniform standard of price secures the placing on the market of the best goods at fair figures.

As the pool takes no cognizance of the retail trade, it does not contemplate any official action on this circular, the allegations of which they say seem very much like myths.

A PIVOTAL support for mirrors, transoms, etc., has been patented. It consists of a hinge formed of three parts, a conical pintle, a socket adapted to receive it, and a support for the projecting end of the pintle, the conical pintle being held in frictional contact with the socket, the device being readily applied for tilting mirrors, transom lights, etc.

THE RELATIONS OF COLOR TO MUSIC.

CERTAIN analysis between music and color have been the subject at all times of observation, particularly among musicians and painters, in what may be termed their structural relations, especially such as concern harmonies and discords. It is not merely that the painter, like the musician, chooses his key and selects such colors of given depths or degrees of clearness and in such proportions as will create harmony and avoid discords, but that in translating the phrases of music into color the conditions present a striking similarity. The working out the precise points of correspondence might presently place painting on the basis of a science. A comparison of existing systems of colors favors, however, on the part of the decorative painter, adherence to rules gained by observation and the exercise of taste and common sense. Light might even be thrown on the nature of our sensations, seeing the effects of the qualities of music and color are not dissimilar.

As a note depends on the number of vibrations of the strings, so the color of light depends on the movement of its undulations. It is found that the undulations of color thrown on the iris increase in quantity as they ascend, for instance, from red to violet, the same phenomena occur in the musical scale in passing from the graver to the more acute sounds. In music every note in the gamut may be supported from a fundamental bass note, with the third and fifth forming the common chord. For the three chords required in the bass clef we have a color scale submitted, as the best nomenclature attainable. The first chord founded on C, red; E, yellow; G, blue; the second on F, green; A, indigo; C, red; the third on G, blue; B, violet; D, orange.

As resulting from the properties and offices of the different intervals of the musical scale, the following names are appropriated to the colors: C, dominant or tonic; D, super tonic; E, mediant; F, sub-dominant; A, sub-mediant; B, sub-tonic. Dominant is applied to the fifth interval from predominance in harmony, mediant to the third, from the position A holds between tonic and dominant.

There is a legend of a series of marches, waltzes and fantasias having been executed by a musician from a score composed of the seven prismatic colors, shades and tints, now grave, now gay, being introduced. In the musical color scale most nearly perfected, which is made to answer the key note C, blue and red are set down as primary colors, colors which are stated to occur respectively, taking number and strength of undulations and harmonizing effects as a guide, in the first, third and fifth intervals. The pitch in sounds is regarded in the scheme as equivalent to tint or hue of color, determining their relation to each other.

Without going into rudiments we may here state that sounds in unison are those whose respective undulations render it possible for them to act together without neutralizing each other. Red is assumed to be the analogue of C, the natural key in music, in the color scale, being the least infrangible and its vibrations being longer and slower than any of its own series; so also with other intervals. Undue force of the dominant as compared with intervals of a perfect chord, is held to be injurious to unity in painting as to unison in music.

En passant, Salvator Rosa, Carl Antonio, Guiclo Romano and Julio Romano, the last named an eminent disciple of Raffaele, were also musicians; and it may be surmised that their knowledge of music aided them in their designs. The paintings of many of the great masters have been cited by theorists on the subject, as illustrating the analogy between music and color compositions. The painter fixes on a definite key, then localizes the dependent colors, and it is held that the better the composition, decorative or pictorial, the more closely it assimilates to the arrangement of musical chords. From theory nothing is to be expected as long as there is no practical standard, but the continued study of the relations of the musical to the chromatic scale may in time result in the production of a more satisfying color scheme than has yet been developed.

In the application of the science of music to color, it is found that alternate colors produce common chords, red, yellow and blue answering to C, E and G, and orange, green and purple to D, F and A. If we take one primitive, say red, the other two, yellow and blue, must exist either separately or in its complementary green, or taking a compound color, purple, composed of red and blue, its complementary will be found either in the opposite color, yellow, or in the alternate compounds, green and orange taken together. There is an evident analogy in the effects of interference, both in color and sound. Yellow, in chromatic phrase, is said to be "indifferent" to green, red to orange, violet to blue; now, musically speaking, these intervals being seconds, are positive discords. When a green opposed to a strong yellow appears blue, a purple to a blue red, and an orange to a red appears yellow, this arises as in musical vibrations from certain undulations interfering with each other, as when green opposed to a strong yellow appears blue, a purple to a blue red, and an orange to a red appears yellow.